

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A distillation system for recovering acetic acid from water during terephthalic acid production comprising:
 - a dehydration column having an overhead section;
 - at least one input feed stream containing acetic acid and water;
 - an entrainer; and
 - a condenser to separate the acetic acid from water.
2. The distillation system according to claim 1 wherein the dehydration column is an azeotropic dehydration column.
3. The distillation system according to claim 1 wherein the dehydration column an output bottom stream and an output overhead stream.
4. The distillation system according to claim 3 wherein the output bottom stream has a higher acetic acid concentration than the at least one input feed stream.
5. The distillation system according to claim 3 wherein the output overhead stream has a lower dilute acetic acid concentration than the at least one input feed stream.

6. The distillation system according to claim 1 wherein the condenser condenses a vapor from the overhead of the dehydration column to generate a low pressure steam.

7. The distillation system according to claim 6 wherein the low pressure steam generated has a pressure of at least 0.6 kg/cm² abs.

8. The distillation system according to claim 6 wherein the low pressure steam generated has a pressure from 0.7 kg/cm² abs to 2.0 kg/cm² abs.

9. The distillation system according to claim 1 wherein the entrainer is N-butyl acetate.

10. The distillation system according to claim 1 wherein the entrainer is I-butyl acetate.

11. The distillation system according to claim 1 wherein the entrainer is a mixture of N-butyl acetate and I-butyl acetate.

12. The distillation system according to claim 1 wherein the distillation column has an overhead pressure of at least 1.2 kg/cm² abs.

13. The distillation system according to claim 1 wherein the distillation column has an overhead pressure greater than 1.2 kg/cm² abs.

14. A distillation method for recovering acetic acid from water during the production of terephthalic acid, the method comprising;
- providing an input feed stream of water containing acetic acid;
- distilling the input feed stream in an azeotropic dehydration column having an overhead section into a vapor stream;
- entraining the vapor;
- condensing the vapor stream to separate acetic acid from water; and
- outputting a bottom stream having a higher acetic acid concentration than the input feed stream and an output overhead stream having a more dilute acetic acid concentration than the input feed stream.
15. The distillation method according to claim 14 wherein the entraining step uses N-butyl acetate.
16. The distillation method according to claim 14 wherein the entraining step uses I-butyl acetate.
17. The distillation method according to claim 14 wherein the entraining step uses a mixture of N-butyl acetate and I-butyl acetate.
18. The distillation method according to claim 14 wherein the condensing step generates a low pressure steam.
19. The distillation method according to claim 18 wherein the low pressure steam is at least 0.6 kg/cm² abs.

20. The distillation method according to claim 18 wherein the low pressure steam is from 0.7 kg/cm² abs to 2.0 kg/cm² abs.

21. The distillation method according to claim 14 wherein the distilling step has an overhead pressure of at least 1.2 kg/cm² abs.

22. The distillation method according to claim 14 wherein the distilling step has an overhead pressure of greater than 1.2 kg/cm² abs.